

Results of the 2006 Parent Survey

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PART ONE

Background

Since 2002 South Carolina has collected information on parental involvement and documented parent perceptions of their child's school on the annual school report cards. Section 59-18-900 of the Education Accountability Act (EAA) requires that the annual school report card include "evaluations of the school by parents, teachers, and students" as performance indicators to evaluate schools. In addition Section 59-28-190 of the Parental Involvement in Their Children's Education Act requires the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) to "survey parents to determine if state and local efforts are effective in increasing parental involvement." The tool that has been adopted by the EOC and administered by the Department of Education to meet these statutory requirements is the annual parent survey.

Since 2002 the EOC has issued yearly reports documenting the results of the annual parent survey. These reports focus on two specific areas: (1) parent perceptions or satisfaction levels with schools; and (2) parental involvement activities as self-reported by parents. Copies of these reports can be downloaded at www.sceoc.com.

Historically, the annual parent surveys between 2002 and 2005 have demonstrated that parents have an overwhelmingly positive perception of the learning environment and social and physical environment of their child's school. However, consistently, only two-thirds of parents responding to the surveys had a favorable view of home-school relations at their child's school. Parents expressed concern over three issues. A significant percentage of parents felt that their child's school did not include them in decision-making. Many parents felt that their child's school did not give them information about what their child should be learning. And, parents cited discipline as a problem. The surveys revealed that respondents generally had similar socioeconomic characteristics and self-reported comparable levels of parental involvement in their child's school. The work schedule of parents was consistently the greatest obstacle to their involvement in schools.

PART TWO

Administration of the 2006 Parent Survey

During the second semester of each school year, the Department of Education, in cooperation with the EOC, administers the parent survey. According to guidelines issued by the EOC in 2001, the parents of students in the highest grade at elementary and middle schools should complete a student survey. In high schools and career centers, parents of all 11th graders are surveyed. Parents in schools containing grades 2 or lower (K-1, K-2, and 1-2 configurations) are not surveyed. An independent contractor, hired by the Department, mails the surveys directly to schools along with envelopes for the distribution and collection of the surveys. Two sets of instructions for administering the survey are also included in the packets along with a letter from the Executive Director of the EOC to the school principal, explaining the history, methodology and importance of the parent survey. In addition to a survey and an envelope, parents receive a letter from the state Superintendent of Education that reinforces the importance of completing the survey and offering directions on how to complete and return the survey. Spanish versions of the survey are provided to schools. The name of each school is printed on the survey forms to assist parents who are completing surveys for multiple schools. In Fiscal Year 2005-06 the Department of Education reported that the total cost of the survey was \$108,868.88 which included the cost of printing, shipping, processing and scanning.

The 2006 administration of the parent survey occurred over a thirty-one day period and involved the following actions.

Week of February 27, 2006	Schools receive all survey forms.
March 21, 2006	Due date for parent survey forms to be returned to the school.
March 24, 2006	Due date for schools to mail completed survey forms to contractor.

A school survey coordinator, a staff person designated by the school principal, distributed and collected the parent surveys at each school according to instructions provided by the Department of Education. The survey coordinator distributed envelopes containing a parent survey and a letter from the state Superintendent of Education to each classroom teacher within the designated grade being surveyed. Then, teachers gave each student an envelope. Students were asked to take the envelopes home to their parents to complete and return to school. Parents were given the option of mailing the survey directly to the Department of Education with parents incurring the cost of the mailing. The school survey coordinator was expressly advised that mailing of the envelopes directly to the parents was also allowed with all costs to be borne by the school. Information does not exist to document if any schools mailed the parent surveys to parents.

Upon receiving the completed parent surveys, the school survey coordinator then mailed the survey forms to the contractor for scanning and preparation of the raw data file. Individual school results were tabulated by the Department of Education. The overall satisfaction scores of three questions relating to the school's overall learning environment, home and school relations, and social and physical environment were printed on the 2006 annual school report cards. For each school, the Department

aggregated the responses to all survey questions and provided the summary data to the district office.

As in prior years, the 2006 parent survey contained forty-six questions designed to elicit information on parental perceptions and parental involvement patterns. For the first twenty-one questions, parents were asked to respond to individual statements using one of the following responses: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree or Don't Know. These twenty-one questions focused on three key components: learning environment, home and school relations, and the physical and social environment of their child's school. These components and individual activities reflect the framework devised by Joyce Epstein of the National Network of Partnership Schools.

The one change in the 2006 parent survey involved references to "home-school relations." Unlike the 2005 parent survey and all previous surveys, the reference to "home-school relations" was changed on the 2006 parent survey to "home and school relations." This change came as an informal suggestion of the Parental Involvement Subcommittee of the EOC on March 20, 2006. The Subcommittee suggested the change to eliminate any confusion that might exist with the term "homeschooling."

The 2006 survey concluded by seeking information on parental involvement activities and socio-economic characteristics of the respondents. Parents were asked about their participation in various parental involvement activities both in and outside of the school. Parents were also asked to determine from a list of responses potential barriers to their involvement in their child's education. Finally, parents were asked to provide specific information about themselves, their child, and their household. Parents were asked four questions about their child – their child's grade in school, gender, race/ethnicity, and grades on his or her last report card. Four questions sought information about the parent, his or her gender, race/ethnicity, highest level of education and total yearly household income.

A copy of the 2006 survey and instructions provided by the Department of Education to schools are in the appendix.

PART THREE

Results of the 2006 Parent Survey

Respondent Profiles and Return Rates

For the fourth consecutive year the total number of parent surveys returned increased. Approximately 3.89% more surveys were returned in 2006 than in 2005. And since the original statewide administration of the survey in 2002, the total number of surveys returned has increased by almost twenty-five percent.

ALL RESPONDENTS

	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
Total Parent Surveys Returned:	69,495	66,895	66,283	64,732	55,864
One or Fewer Questions not Answered	88.04%	88.30%	86.05%	84.59%	86.44%
Two or Fewer Questions not Answered	90.86%	91.09%	90.76%	89.14%	91.65%

Analyzing the data provides the following information on the 2006 respondents. For purposes of this and all other analysis in the report, an elementary school is defined as grades one through five, middle school as grades 6 through 8 and high school as grades 9 through 12. Totals may not add to 100% because some responses had no or multiple marks for a question.

ALL RESPONDENTS

	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
Child in Elementary School	42.20%	42.53%	42.98%	43.19%	44.37%
Child in Middle School	36.09%	36.56%	36.79%	37.06%	38.84%
Child in High School	19.24%	18.58%	17.80%	15.97%	14.87%

(n=69,495)

	2006	2005
Male	14.09%	14.20%
Female	83.87%	83.93%
White	55.86%	56.56%
Non-White	40.09%	40.13%

(n=69,495)

- As in 2005, approximately 42% of the parents who responded completed the survey because they had a child in elementary school.
- For the fourth consecutive year, the percentage of parents who had a child in high school and who completed the survey increased while the percentage of parents who had a child in middle school and who completed the survey declined.
- As in prior surveys, the respondents were six times more likely to be women than men.

- As in prior surveys, in 2006 the majority of all respondents were of white ethnicity.
- When asked about their child's academic success, over half (51.47%) of the respondents who completed the survey reported that their child received mostly A's and B's on his or her last report card. Less than three percent of the parents reported that their child received mostly D's and F's on his or her last report card.

ALL RESPONDENTS

Child's Grades on Last Report Card	2006	2005	2004	2003
Mostly A's and B's	51.47%	51.06%	50.18%	49.65%
Mostly B's and C's	29.66%	29.57%	29.95%	29.50%
Mostly C's and D's	11.50%	11.68%	12.29%	12.26%
Mostly D's and F's	2.59%	3.09%	3.42%	3.05%

(n=69,495)

- Regarding the educational attainment of the respondents, generally parents who responded to the survey were more likely to have obtained an associate or college degree and to have postgraduate study as compared to the general population of South Carolina. The data showed that the level of educational achievement of parent survey respondents is consistently the same across the years.

ALL RESPONDENTS

<u>Question:</u> What is the highest level of education you have completed?	2006	2005	2004	2003	Educational Attainment for Persons 18 Years and Over in SC ¹
Attended Elementary or High School	13.21%	13.34%	13.91%	15.00%	23.9%
Completed High School/GED	25.90%	25.43%	26.12%	25.48%	30.0%
Associate Degree	8.98%	8.68%	8.53%	8.08%	6.2%
Attended College	21.14%	21.68%	21.55%	21.26%	21.2%
College Degree	16.61%	16.55%	16.04%	15.47%	12.6%
Postgraduate Study	8.68%	8.98%	8.90%	8.48%	6.0%

(n=69,495)

- Regarding the annual household income of the respondents, in 2006 50.19% of the parents who completed the survey reported having an annual household income in excess of \$35,000 as compared to 50.47% in 2005. For comparison

¹ 2006 South Carolina Statistical Abstract, last updated October 5, 2006, <http://www.ors2.state.sc.us/abstract/chapter7/education4.asp>.

purposes, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, the median household income in South Carolina over a two-year period between 2004 and 2005 was \$40,107.²

It should be noted that according to the 2006 annual district report cards the statewide poverty index for all school districts was 63.58%. This index combines information about the percentage of students eligible for Medicaid services and the percentage participating in the Federal free or reduced-price lunch program.³ According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture Child Nutrition Programs, Income and Eligible Guidelines for school year 2005-06, a family of four with an annual income \$25,155 was eligible for the free lunch program. A family of four with an income of \$35,798 was eligible for the reduced-price lunch program. Consequently, based on the statewide poverty index, respondents to the parent survey generally report being more economically advantaged than the general student population in the districts.

ALL RESPONDENTS

Annual Household Incomes	2006	2005	2004	2003
Less than \$15,000	12.61%	12.98%	13.22%	13.12%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	14.05%	14.11%	15.00%	14.78%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	13.47%	13.64%	13.50%	13.40%
\$35,000 to \$54,999	17.10%	17.13%	17.71%	17.90%
\$55,000 to \$75,000	14.32%	14.39%	13.87%	13.86%
More than \$75,000	19.77%	18.95%	18.15%	16.78%
No or multiple response	8.69%	8.80%	8.55%	10.16%

(n=69,495)

The statewide parent response is important in evaluating parental perceptions and parental involvement from a statewide perspective. However, at the individual school site, schools need to receive an adequate number of surveys to determine parental perceptions and to evaluate parental involvement efforts. The following chart is a distribution of schools based on the number of surveys returned at the individual school.

² U.S. Census Bureau. "Current Population Survey, 2004 to 2006 Annual Social and Economic Supplements." <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/income05/statemhi2.html>.

³ "2006-07 Accountability Manual: the 2006-2007 Annual School and District Report Card System for South Carolina Public Schools and School Districts," Education Oversight Committee, June 2006.

	2006	2005	2004
Number of Parent Surveys Returned	Number of Schools*	Number of Schools	Number of Schools
Greater than 350	4	3	1
300 to 350	3	0	2
250 to 299	3	4	4
200 to 249	8	12	8
150 to 199	27	36	36
100 to 149	127	107	115
50 to 99	391	401	384
25 to 49	314	335	319
Less than 25	158	179	159
TOTAL	1035	1077	1028

- Excludes vocational centers and K-1, K-2 and 1-2 schools, ten schools that had return rates in excess of 100% based on the 135-day average daily membership (ADM) and one school that had missing data.

Because distribution does not take into account variations in school size, the response rates by school were then compared to the 2005-06 135-day average daily membership (ADM) of schools. The survey guidelines state that the parents of students in the highest grade at elementary and middle schools should complete a student survey. In high schools and career centers, parents of all 11th graders should complete a survey. Parents in schools containing grades 2 or lower (K-1, K-2, and 1-2 configurations) are not surveyed. Based upon these guidelines and using the 135-day ADM for the actual grades surveyed, the return rates in the state and by school type school were as follows.

2006 Return Rates

Type School *	Average Enrollment ⁴	Number of Schools in Survey	Mean Return Rate	Median Return Rate	Minimum Return Rate	Maximum Return Rate
Elementary	490	581	61.3%	61.3%	6.8%	100.0%
Middle	624	249	41.6%	40.8%	0.9%	100.0%
High	956	205	29.7%	25.8%	1.5%	100.0%
STATE		1,035	50.3%	50.4%	0.9%	100.0%

* Excludes vocational centers and K-1, K-2 and 1-2 schools.

The data revealed that the average return rate in elementary schools was over 60%. However, the data also reveal that the average return rate of high schools was less than half of the return rate for elementary schools. Clearly, more focus should be placed on improving the return rate in high schools as well as middle schools where the mean return rate was 41.6%. The mean return rate of all schools in South Carolina was 50.3%.

⁴ Based on the 2005 School and District Report Card Data Files,
<http://ed.sc.gov/topics/researchandstats/schoolreportcard/2005/data/>

Parent Perceptions of Their Child's School

On the annual school report cards, parental responses to three questions are published. These questions were designed to measure parent perceptions of the learning environment, home and school relations, and the physical and social environment of their child's school. An analysis of the responses to these questions and a comparison of the responses to prior surveys follow.

Learning Environment

Question 5: I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school.	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
Agree or Strongly Agree	81.26%	81.16%	80.94%	80.13%	80.61%
Disagree or Strongly Disagree	14.28%	14.57%	15.03%	15.53%	15.50%

In 2006 81.26% of all respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with this statement while 14.28% of all respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed. Analyzing the results across selected variables revealed the following:

I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school.

Parents of/with:	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
White Ethnicity	82.45%	14.07%
Non-White Ethnicity	80.51%	14.32%
Child in Elementary School	85.83%	10.68%
Child in Middle School	78.17%	17.25%
Child in High School	77.76%	16.76%
Child Making A's & B's	85.58%	11.13%
Child Making B's & C's	79.75%	15.36%
Child Making C's & D's	72.75%	21.69%
Child Making D's & F's	62.96%	29.92%
Household Income > \$35,000	82.28%	14.24%
Household Income < \$35,000	81.21%	13.97%
Some College Education	81.50%	14.89%
High School or Less Education	81.88%	13.24%

Parents of a child in elementary school or parents whose child made A's or B's had more favorable perceptions of their child's learning environment than all other parents. The data reflect that parents' positive perception of their child's school declined as the child's grades declined with only 62.96% of parents whose child made mostly D's and F's on his or her report cards satisfied with the learning environment at their child's school. There appeared to be no significant differences between parents of different racial or socioeconomic backgrounds on this issue.

Home and School Relations

Question 16: I am satisfied with home and school relations at my child's school.	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
Agree or Strongly Agree	76.58%	67.84%	66.90%	66.76%	68.59%
Disagree or Strongly Disagree	16.59%	17.66%	18.16%	18.63%	18.76%

In 2006 parental satisfaction with home and school relations increased to a five-year high. Over three-fourths of all parents agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with home and school relations at their child's school. As previously noted, unlike the 2005 parent survey and all previous surveys, the reference to "home-school relations" was changed on the 2006 parent survey to "home and school relations." This change was a suggestion of the Parental Involvement Subcommittee of the EOC in March of 2006 to eliminate any confusion that might exist with the term "homeschooling."

To determine if this increase in parental satisfaction could be attributed to a specific subgroup of parents, the prior years' survey results were analyzed accordingly. Analyzing the 2006 results across other variables revealed the following: the data show that across grade spans and ethnicities improvement in satisfaction levels consistently improved between 7 and 10%. The greatest increase occurred with non-white parents for whom 10% more parents in 2006 than in 2005 agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with home and school relations. Approximately 70.61% of parents whose child attended high school were satisfied with home and school relations as compared to 82.90% of parents whose child attended an elementary school.

I am satisfied with the home and school relations at my child's school.

Parents of/with:	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
White Ethnicity	77.26%	17.00%
Non-White Ethnicity	76.60%	15.78%
Child in Elementary School	82.90%	11.69%
Child in Middle School	72.71%	20.12%
Child in High School	70.61%	21.01%
Child Making A's & B's	80.45%	13.85%
Child Making B's & C's	75.20%	17.77%
Child Making C's & D's	68.81%	23.29%
Child Making D's & F's	60.51%	30.92%
Household Income > \$35,000	77.42%	16.88%
Household Income < \$35,000	76.83%	16.17%
Some College Education	76.66%	17.38%
High School or Less Education	77.50%	15.34%

While the percentage of parents who were satisfied with home and school relations increased significantly, again as in prior years, one out of every five parents whose child attended a middle or high school in South Carolina was not satisfied with home school relations. And, like parent perception of the learning environment at their child's school, the parent satisfaction with home and school relations declined as the child's grades on his or her report card declined.

Social and Physical Environment

Question 21: I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school.	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
Agree or Strongly Agree	77.80%	77.67%	76.99%	77.25%	77.94%
Disagree or Strongly Disagree	16.18%	16.12%	16.76%	16.20%	16.07%

In 2006 77.80% of all respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with this statement while 16.18% disagreed or strongly disagreed. These figures are consistent with prior year's parental perceptions of the social and physical environment at their child's school from the prior year's study. Breaking down the responses across selected variables revealed the following.

I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school.

Parents of/with:	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
White Ethnicity	79.03%	16.29%
Non-White Ethnicity	76.99%	15.90%
Child in Elementary School	85.64%	10.27%
Child in Middle School	72.88%	20.53%
Child in High School	70.77%	21.14%
Child Making A's & B's	81.12%	14.22%
Child Making B's & C's	76.37%	17.25%
Child Making C's & D's	71.94%	20.52%
Child Making D's & F's	64.29%	26.47%
Household Income > \$35,000	79.48%	16.09%
Household Income < \$35,000	77.09%	16.18%
Some College Education	78.91%	16.43%
High School or Less Education	77.28%	15.69%

Overwhelmingly, parents who had a child in elementary school were more satisfied with the social and physical environment of their child's school than parents whose child attended a middle or high school. One in five of all parents whose child attended a middle or high school was dissatisfied with the social and physical environment of their child's school. Again, parents' satisfaction levels declined as their child's grades on report cards declined.

On a statewide basis, parent perceptions of the learning environment, of home and school relations and of the social and physical environment of their child's school were overwhelmingly positive in 2006. Parent satisfaction with home and school relations increased significantly to almost 77%. The trend still remained that parents whose children attend middle or high school were less satisfied on all three indicators than parents of elementary students.

The following analysis seeks to determine if there were any differences in parental perceptions across schools based on the absolute performance rating of their child's school and what, if any, changes occurred since 2002. Absolute performance ratings are based on the 2005 annual school report cards. Again, questions 5, 16, and 21 were analyzed.

Question 5: I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school.

Agree or Strongly Agree					
Parents whose child attends a school rated:	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
Excellent	87.44%	85.61%	86.28%	87.05%	87.81%
Good	85.44%	84.58%	83.40%	82.56%	83.06%
Average	81.53%	81.06%	78.94%	77.51%	78.75%
Below Average	76.99%	75.05%	70.89%	70.89%	70.55%
Unsatisfactory	69.47%	66.38%	61.30%	62.88%	65.20%

Question 5: I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school.

Disagree or Strongly Disagree					
Parents whose child attends a school rated:	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
Excellent	8.93%	11.11%	10.65%	10.10%	9.73%
Good	10.58%	12.11%	13.29%	13.77%	13.36%
Average	14.15%	14.57%	17.01%	18.18%	17.13%
Below Average	18.07%	20.01%	23.61%	23.53%	23.95%
Unsatisfactory	24.85%	27.63%	32.19%	30.97%	28.41%

In 2006 parental satisfaction with the learning environment improved for all parents, regardless of the absolute rating of their child's school. Compared to the 2005 parent survey, the greatest percentage increase (3.09%) in positive perception was from parents whose child attended a school with an absolute performance rating of Unsatisfactory. And, parents whose child attended a school with an Excellent rating expressed less disagreement with question 5 in 2006 than in 2005. As the absolute rating of the school improves, so do the parent perceptions of the learning environment of their child's school. On the other hand, the data still showed that one in four parents whose child attended a school with an absolute rating of Unsatisfactory was not satisfied with the learning environment of their child's school.

Question 16: I am satisfied with home and school relations at my child's school.

Agree or Strongly Agree					
Parents whose child attends a school rated:	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
Excellent	80.29%	71.57%	71.63%	72.27%	74.65%
Good	79.86%	70.30%	68.58%	68.57%	70.06%
Average	76.61%	67.59%	64.99%	64.42%	67.34%
Below Average	73.78%	63.43%	59.50%	59.98%	63.21%
Unsatisfactory	70.12%	58.37%	57.42%	56.08%	58.96%

Question 16: I am satisfied with home and school relations at my child's school.

Disagree or Strongly Disagree					
Parents whose child attends a school rated:	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
Excellent	13.06%	15.93%	15.54%	15.21%	15.03%
Good	13.90%	16.21%	16.94%	17.57%	17.85%
Average	16.88%	17.32%	19.66%	20.64%	19.71%
Below Average	19.02%	20.70%	23.09%	23.59%	22.28%
Unsatisfactory	22.06%	25.42%	25.91%	27.90%	26.94%

Again, since 2002, the parent survey has demonstrated that parental satisfaction with home and school relations improved as the absolute performance rating improved and declined as the absolute performance rating of the school declined. However, comparing parent responses in 2006 to question 16 (home and school relations) with those to question 5 (learning environment) the percentage changes between schools with different absolute ratings was not as large when looking at home and school relations. As reflected in the statewide numbers, parental satisfaction with home and school relations increased significantly in 2006. When analyzing results by the absolute rating of the school in 2005 and 2006, there was an 11.75% increase in 2006 in the percentage of parents who had a positive perception of home and school relations and whose child attended a school with an absolute rating of Unsatisfactory. Still, however, one in five parents whose child attended a school with an absolute rating of Unsatisfactory expressed dissatisfaction with home and school relations.

Question 21: I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school.

Agree or Strongly Agree					
Parents whose child attends a school rated:	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
Excellent	84.58%	82.43%	83.60%	85.42%	86.71%
Good	83.48%	82.49%	80.31%	80.69%	80.71%
Average	78.63%	77.87%	74.93%	74.08%	76.05%
Below Average	72.21%	69.36%	63.40%	65.34%	66.42%
Unsatisfactory	62.91%	60.58%	53.88%	57.37%	60.50%

Disagree or Strongly Disagree					
Parents whose child attends a school rated:	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
Excellent	10.63%	13.16%	11.76%	10.56%	9.61%
Good	11.67%	12.44%	14.36%	13.52%	13.74%
Average	15.46%	15.89%	18.51%	19.20%	17.42%
Below Average	20.93%	22.82%	28.47%	26.64%	25.70%
Unsatisfactory	28.99%	31.27%	35.50%	34.84%	31.31%

On the issue of the social and physical environment, again, as compared to the prior year, all parents, regardless of the absolute rating of their child's school expressed

greater satisfaction with the social and physical environment of their child's school in 2006 than in 2005. The most significant improvement in parental satisfaction with the social and physical environment at their child's school was expressed by parents whose child attended a school with an absolute rating of Below Average. Similarly, across all schools, fewer parents expressed dissatisfaction with the social and physical environment of their child's school in 2006. Almost thirty percent of parents whose child attended a school with an absolute rating of Unsatisfactory were not satisfied with the social and physical environment of their child's school.

Overall, the historical trend continues – parental satisfaction with the social and physical environment of their child's school improves as the absolute performance rating of the school improves and declines as the absolute performance rating of the school declines. The largest difference in satisfaction and dissatisfaction occurs between parents whose child attends a school with an absolute rating of Excellent and parents whose child attends a school with an absolute rating of Unsatisfactory.

Parental Involvement Programs and Initiatives

The second objective of the parent survey is to determine the effectiveness of state and local efforts to increase parental involvement. The survey instrument includes individual questions to elicit detailed information on the learning environment, home and school relations, and social and physical environment of schools. At the school level responses to these questions can reveal the strengths and weaknesses of parental involvement initiatives at the individual school site. Statewide, the data provide policymakers information on the overall effectiveness of policies and programs in promoting parental involvement. The following analysis again focuses on the learning environment, home-school relations, and the social and physical environment of schools.

Learning Environment: In 2006 parents responded accordingly to the following questions regarding the learning environment of their child's school. Responses to the prior surveys are included for comparison purposes:

Agree or Strongly Agree					
LEARNING ENVIRONMENT	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.	87.74%	88.42%	89.07%	88.12%	89.38%
My child's school has high expectations for student learning.	87.36%	87.66%	88.18%	87.49%	88.40%
My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	87.42%	87.74%	88.11%	87.52%	88.83%
My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	76.96%	76.40%	75.61%	75.56%	77.42%

The data are consistent across the five years. Parents overwhelmingly feel that their child's teacher or teachers provide the academic assistance necessary to provide a positive learning environment. The one area that parents consistently would like more assistance is the provision of extra help for their child.

Home and School Relations: Based on national research and the results of South Carolina's annual parent surveys, parents with children in middle or high school are less satisfied with home and school relations than parents of elementary age children. Some contend that this dissatisfaction is due to the documented decline of parental involvement at the middle and high school level. Research points out that parents "generally become less involved as their children grow older for many reasons: schools are bigger and farther from home, the curriculum is more sophisticated, each student has several teachers, parents of older students are more likely to be employed, and students are beginning to establish some sense of separation and independence from parents."⁵ On the other hand, parents point out that middle and high schools generally do not provide forums for involvement or consistent methods of communication with parents. "The research on the effectiveness of parental involvement with older students, therefore, often focuses on different forms of participation- e.g., parents monitoring homework, helping students make postsecondary plans and select courses which support these plans, parent-school agreements on rewards for achievement and behavioral improvements—as well as some of the 'standby' function such as regular homeschool communication about students' progress and parent attendance at school-sponsored activities."⁶

Ten statements were included in the parent survey to highlight issues of home and school relations between parents whose child attended an elementary, middle or high school. The responses to these statements were analyzed and the data reflected in the following tables.

<i>Parents who Agreed or Strongly Agreed with the statement:</i>	<i>All Parents</i>	<i>Elementary</i>	<i>Middle</i>	<i>High</i>
<i>n=</i>	<i>69,495</i>	<i>29,328</i>	<i>25,079</i>	<i>13,369</i>
My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child	53.14%	63.98%	45.90%	42.76%
My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn.	62.04%	74.28%	56.00%	46.38%
My child's teachers invite me to visit my child's classrooms during the school day.	54.36%	68.17%	46.89%	37.64%
My child's school returns my phone calls or e-mails promptly.	72.94%	78.55%	70.17%	66.53%
My child's school includes me in decision-making.	63.52%	70.79%	59.57%	55.31%
My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school.	74.81%	82.46%	70.73%	66.24%
<i>Parents who Agreed or Strongly Agreed with the statement:</i>	<i>All Parents</i>	<i>Elementary</i>	<i>Middle</i>	<i>High</i>

⁵ Kathleen Cotton and Karen Reed Wikelund, "Parent Involvement in Education." Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 2001, <http://www.nwrel.org/scpd/sirs/3/cu6.htm.l>.

⁶ Ibid.

<i>n</i> =	69,495	29,328	25,079	13,369
My child's school considers changes based on what parents say.	47.21%	52.53%	42.80%	43.63%
My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend.	74.16%	78.47%	71.59%	70.27%
My child's school treats all students fairly.	61.80%	69.83%	56.55%	54.25%
My principal at my child's school is available and welcoming.	76.24%	81.55%	74.38%	68.73%

As documented in the report on the 2005 parent survey responses, the 2006 survey responses reveal similar concerns by parents. First, less than half of all parents who responded to the survey felt that their child's school considered changes based on parent input. Second, just over half of the respondents noted that their child's teachers contact them to say good things about their child. When analyzing the 2006 responses to these questions by grade level, the data reveal that parents whose child attended high school expressed less agreement than all other parents with these questions. Parents of high school students were significantly less likely to agree that their child's teachers told them how they could help their child. Less than half of parents with middle school and high school students agreed that teachers contacted them to say good things about their child as compared to almost two-thirds of the parents of elementary school children.

Social and Physical Environment: The parent survey includes four statements that describe the social and physical environment of a child's school. The responses to those statements as well as the results from the 2005, 2004, 2003 and 2002 surveys are below:

Agree or Strongly Agree

SOCIAL & PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
My child's school is kept neat and clean.	86.83%	87.57%	87.72%	86.90%	86.67%
My child feels safe at school.	85.92%	86.30%	85.91%	85.68%	85.53%
My child's teachers care about my child as an individual.	78.48%	78.34%	77.55%	77.01%	76.57%
Students at my child's school are well behaved.	55.16%	55.41%	53.38%	54.05%	54.69%

As in prior years, parents who responded to the survey in 2006 noted that student discipline continues to be an issue of concern. Consistently, only 54 to 55% of parents believed that students at their child's school are well behaved. And, despite the national and state issues involving school crime and weapons on campus, 85.92% of parents stated that their child feels safe at school.

The next analysis deals with parents' responses to questions regarding specific parental involvement activities and/or parenting activities in which the respondents participate. It should be emphasized that the results are self-reported. Parents were asked to respond "I do this," "I don't do this but would like to" or "I don't do this and I don't care to" to

thirteen questions regarding specific parental involvement activities. The following three charts document parent responses to these questions in 2006 as compared to the response of the 2005 and 2004 parent survey.

Percentage Parents Responding

"I do this"	2006	2005	2004
Attend open houses or parent-teacher conferences	75.44%	76.18%	77.77%
Attend student programs or performances	74.10%	74.52%	75.27%
Volunteer for the school	38.36%	40.73%	41.23%
Go on trips with my child's school	34.12%	34.88%	34.29%
Participate in School Improvement Council Meetings	13.15%	13.14%	12.03%
Participate in Parent-Teacher-Student Organizations	35.17%	36.85%	38.70%
Participate in school committees	17.48%	18.00%	17.61%
Attend parent workshops	24.68%	24.50%	24.75%
Visit my child's classrooms during the school day	33.93%	34.28%	34.57%
Contact my child's teachers about my child's schoolwork.	72.34%	72.41%	72.51%
Limit the amount of time my child watches TV, plays, video games, surfs the Internet, etc.	81.14%	81.70%	82.77%
Make sure my child does his/her homework.	92.56%	93.08%	93.62%
Help my child with homework when he/she needs it.	91.41%	92.20%	92.76%

Percentage Parents Responding

"I don't do this but would like to"	2006	2005	2004
Attend open houses or parent-teacher conferences	17.69%	17.28%	16.78%
Attend student programs or performances	18.24%	18.25%	18.06%
Volunteer for the school	35.75%	34.63%	34.52%
Go on trips with my child's school	42.14%	42.41%	42.91%
Participate in School Improvement Council Meetings	47.21%	47.58%	48.35%
Participate in Parent-Teacher-Student Organizations	36.01%	35.56%	34.47%
Participate in school committees	40.39%	40.75%	40.75%
Attend parent workshops	40.62%	40.67%	40.87%
Visit my child's classrooms during the school day	50.49%	50.58%	50.93%
Contact my child's teachers about my child's schoolwork.	20.92%	21.06%	20.70%
Limit the amount of time my child watches TV, plays, video games, surfs the Internet, etc.	9.96%	9.90%	9.02%
Make sure my child does his/her homework.	4.46%	4.12%	3.56%
Help my child with homework when he/she needs it.	5.78%	5.10%	4.49%

Percentage Parents Responding

"I don't do this and I don't care to"	2006	2005	2004
Attend open houses or parent-teacher conferences	3.87%	3.54%	3.27%
Attend student programs or performances	3.80%	3.43%	3.27%
Volunteer for the school	19.51%	18.51%	18.06%
Go on trips with my child's school	15.16%	14.62%	14.72%
"I don't do this and I don't care to"	2006	2005	2004
Participate in School Improvement Council Meetings	29.86%	29.21%	29.77%
Participate in Parent-Teacher-Student Organizations	22.86%	21.57%	21.34%
Participate in school committees	30.91%	30.06%	30.83%
Attend parent workshops	17.25%	16.58%	16.48%
Visit my child's classrooms during the school day	13.55%	12.96%	12.19%
Contact my child's teachers about my child's schoolwork.	4.93%	4.59%	4.55%
Limit the amount of time my child watches TV, plays, video games, surfs the Internet, etc.	7.30%	6.75%	6.38%
Make sure my child does his/her homework.	1.72%	1.55%	1.39%
Help my child with homework when he/she needs it.	1.61%	1.47%	1.32%

As in prior survey years, parents reported participating in the following activities:

- Over eighty percent of the respondents reported limiting the amount of time their child spends watching television, playing video games or surfing the Internet.
- Over ninety percent of the respondents reported making sure their child does his or her homework and helps their child with homework.
- Over three-fourths reported attending open house, parent-teacher conferences, student programs and student performances.
- Over one-third reported volunteering for the school, going on trips, participating in Parent-Teacher-Student Organizations and visiting their child's classrooms during the school day.
- 72% of the parents reported contacting their child's' teachers about schoolwork.

For those parents who do not report participating in some of these activities, parents responded accordingly:

- Half of the parents wanted to visit their child's classrooms.
- Over forty percent of the parents, wanted to go on trips with their child's school, participate in School Improvement Council meetings, participate in school committees and attend parent workshops.
- Only a small percentage of parents (less than 4%) did not want to attend open houses, student programs or parent-teacher conferences.
- Approximately one out of three parents did not want to participate in school committees while one in five parents did not want to participate in School Improvement Councils or parent-teacher student organizations.

The next analysis seeks to determine if there are any differences in parental involvement across schools based on the absolute performance rating of their child's school. This is the second year that this analysis has been conducted. Questions 22 through 29 of the parent survey were analyzed. These questions reflect parental involvement at the school site. It should be emphasized that the parents self-report their involvement at the school site.

As the following tables illustrate, a greater percentage of parents completing the survey and having a child who attended a school with an absolute rating of Excellent or Good reported that they were involved in school-based activities excluding School Improvement Councils. A greater percentage of these parents reported attending open houses, parent-teacher conferences or student programs, volunteering at their child's school, and participating on school committees in 2006 than in 2005. However, proportionately, twice as many parents whose child attended a school with an absolute rating of Unsatisfactory responded they there were not involved in these activities but wanted to be involved. Over half of these parents did not volunteer in their child's school, go on school trips, participate in school committees, participate in the School Improvement Council, or attend parent workshops but wanted to.

Percentage of Parents Responding Whose Child Attended in 2006 a School with an Absolute Rating of:

(In parenthesis are the 2005 parent survey results)

"I do this"	Excellent	Good	Average	Below Average	Unsatisfactory
Attend open houses or parent-teacher conferences	81.59 (80.41)	80.43 (83.09)	77.69 (79.50)	70.28 (71.64)	65.39 (62.77)
Attend student programs or performances	81.66 (80.40)	79.49 (81.47)	75.92 (77.89)	68.41 (69.45)	62.76 (58.73)
Volunteer for the school	49.50 (49.40)	45.29 (47.86)	38.45 (41.77)	31.30 (33.01)	27.66 (26.54)
Go on trips with my child's school	42.37 (41.87)	40.01 (41.10)	34.79 (36.20)	28.44 (28.06)	24.96 (21.67)
Participate in School Improvement Council Meetings	12.16 (12.51)	11.66 (12.04)	12.79 (14.18)	15.04 (15.56)	17.10 (17.45)
Participate in Parent-Teacher-Student Organizations	44.36 (43.80)	39.16 (40.31)	34.37 (36.98)	31.74 (34.13)	32.81 (33.28)
Participate in school committees	23.69 (23.10)	20.18 (20.67)	16.33 (17.52)	15.04 (14.71)	15.69 (16.22)
Attend parent workshops	24.84 (24.11)	24.95 (25.14)	24.39 (26.19)	25.53 (26.15)	26.45 (26.54)

On these questions of parental involvement, the largest difference in reported parental involvement activities occurred in parental response to attendance at open houses/parent teacher conferences and student programs or performances. Overall, eighty percent of parents whose child attended a school with an absolute rating of Excellent reported attending these school-site events whereas between 62 and 65% of parents whose child attended a school with an absolute rating of Unsatisfactory reported attending these school functions. One explanation of this disparity may be work schedules. However, parents responding to the survey whose child attended a school with an absolute rating of Unsatisfactory were more likely to participate in the School Improvement Council.

**Percentage of Parents Responding Whose Child Attended in 2006 a School with
an Absolute Rating of:**

(In parenthesis are the 2005 parent survey results)

"I don't do this but I would like to"	Excellent	Good	Average	Below Average	Unsatisfactory
Attend open houses or parent-teacher conferences	12.20 (14.10)	13.54 (13.31)	16.13 (16.68)	21.96 (23.82)	27.22 (32.33)
Attend student programs or performances	12.32 (14.31)	13.98 (14.68)	17.14 (18.03)	22.81 (24.91)	28.15 (34.77)
Volunteer for the school	28.81 (28.37)	31.32 (31.92)	35.57 (37.15)	40.94 (43.44)	44.86 (50.28)
Go on trips with my child's school	33.97 (34.41)	38.51 (40.69)	42.53 (45.89)	46.81 (51.04)	50.13 (56.71)
Participate in School Improvement Council Meetings	41.92 (42.79)	45.01 (48.18)	47.05 (51.47)	50.88 (54.88)	54.64 (59.46)
Participate in Parent- Teacher-Student Organizations	27.11 (28.67)	31.53 (34.02)	36.01 (38.24)	41.69 (44.68)	45.06 (48.90)
Participate in school committees	33.12 (34.25)	36.36 (39.55)	40.51 (44.40)	45.83 (50.22)	49.24 (53.69)
Attend parent workshops	35.21 (36.25)	38.16 (40.31)	40.50 (43.31)	43.95 (46.98)	47.22 (50.77)

When looking at the obstacles to parental involvement, the survey again showed parents perceived that their work was the most common obstacle to their involvement at their child's school. Again, almost one-third of the respondents also indicated that information on how to become involved either does not get to them or gets to them late. The obstacles are consistent across the five years.

Percentage Parents Replying "True" to these questions

	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
Lack of transportation reduces my involvement	12.89%	12.31%	12.47%	12.59%	12.61%
Family health problems reduce my involvement.	15.48%	15.41%	14.88%	15.43%	15.46%
Lack of available care for my children or other family members reduces my involvement.	16.14%	15.87%	15.49%	15.27%	15.25%
My work schedule makes it hard for me to be involved.	55.63%	55.54%	56.23%	56.97%	57.91%
The school does not encourage my involvement.	19.76%	20.04%	20.35%	20.10%	19.68%
Information about how to be involved either comes too late or not at all.	28.19%	28.31%	29.11%	29.07%	28.71%
I don't feel like it is appreciated when I try to be involved.	14.03%	14.08%	14.08%	14.24%	13.89%

Parents were also asked several questions about their child's school and its efforts in increasing parental involvement. Across these questions, two-thirds of parents consistently rated the efforts of their child's school at parental involvement efforts as good or very good. Approximately one-fourth rated the school's efforts as "okay." Across the past three years, these percentages have been relatively constant.

Percentage (%) of Parents who responded:

	Very Good or Good			Bad or Very Bad			Okay		
	2006	2005	2004	2006	2005	2004	2006	2005	2004
School's overall friendliness.	73.11	73.06	72.56	3.39	3.21	3.37	21.79	22.25	22.10
School's interest in parents' ideas and opinions.	56.24	55.74	54.49	9.25	9.15	9.70	31.86	32.45	32.54
School's effort to get important information from parents.	62.01	61.49	60.18	8.63	8.77	9.32	26.98	27.49	27.60
The school's efforts to give important information to parents.	66.55	66.21	65.27	7.63	7.75	8.02	23.75	24.11	24.16
How the school is doing overall.	68.74	68.22	67.73	4.92	4.81	4.96	24.37	25.11	25.01

PART FOUR

Conclusions and Policy Implications

1. For the fourth consecutive year the total number of parent surveys returned in 2006 increased to 69,495 or a 3.89% increase over 2005. The Education Oversight Committee (EOC) recommends that principals and schools continue to encourage parents to complete the survey and to communicate to parents the importance of the information to be obtained from the survey. Principals and school improvement councils should use the results of the survey to identify strengths and weaknesses in their schools and implement policies to improve parental involvement by all parents. Additional efforts to convey the importance of and usefulness of the survey results at schools should be considered.
2. While the parents who completed the survey in 2006 are overall different individuals, these parents had many characteristics in common with those parents who responded in prior years. As the data reveal, respondents in prior years had children in the same type of schools, had similar socioeconomic characteristics and reported the same level of parental involvement in their child's school. The socioeconomic data continue to document that parents who respond to the annual parent surveys report income levels that exceed the student population as reflected by the statewide poverty index. Statewide, efforts need to be made to increase the response rate by parents of low economic means.
3. In 2006 the average response rate to the parent survey across all schools was 50.3%. In elementary schools, the average response rate was 61.3%, in middle schools 41.6% and high schools, 29.7%. Efforts at the district and school level should focus on improving the parent survey response rate at the state's middle and high schools.
4. Based on the results of the 2006 parent survey, parents continue to have an overwhelmingly positive perception of the learning environment and social and physical environment of their child's school. And, for the first time since statewide administration of the parent survey in 2002, parental satisfaction with home and school relations exceeded 67%. Parental satisfaction with home and school relations increased in 2006 to 77% statewide. Parents reported feeling more satisfied with the amount and type of communication that exists between teachers and schools and with the families of their students. The improved satisfaction levels for home and school relations existed at all school levels – parents of children who attend elementary, middle and high schools. It should be noted that the 2006 parent survey instrument was changed in 2006 to refer to "home and school relations" rather than "home-school relations" as previously printed on prior parent surveys.
5. When analyzing parent satisfaction levels by the absolute rating of their child's school, the 2006 parent survey responses documented the largest percentage increases in parent satisfaction with the learning environment and home and school relations for parents whose child attended a school with an absolute rating of Unsatisfactory. Parental satisfaction with the social and physical environment of their child's school increased at the same percentage regardless of the

school's absolute performance rating. However, as in prior surveys, parent satisfaction with the learning environment, home and school relations and social and physical environment of their child's school declined as the absolute rating of their child's school declined and improved as the absolute rating of their child's school improved.

6. For the second year, analysis of parental involvement across schools based on the absolute performance rating of the schools was conducted. The analysis revealed that the level of parental involvement was comparable regardless of the absolute rating of schools. However, a greater percentage parents whose child attended schools with an absolute rating of Excellent or Good reported attending open houses or parent-teacher conferences, attending student programs or performances or volunteering for the school than parents whose child attended a school with an absolute rating of Unsatisfactory.
7. As in prior years, parents noted that their work schedule was the greatest obstacle to their involvement.
8. As in prior years, parents continued to express concern over student behavior at their child's school. Second, less than half of the respondents believed that their child's school considered changes based on parental input. And, just over half of the respondents noted that their child's teachers contacted them to say good things about their child. When analyzing the responses to these questions by grade level, the data reveal that parents whose child attended high school expressed less agreement than all other parents with questions related to home-and-school relations.
9. The EOC reiterates its recommendation to the Governor and the General Assembly that the Department of Education receives increased funding to implement the Parental Involvement in Their Children's Education Act. The EOC had recommended in Fiscal Year 2007-08 an additional \$156,250 for the Department of Education for this initiative; however, increased funding was not included in the appropriation bill.
10. The results of the 2006 parent survey will be distributed to the Department of Education for consideration and use in assisting schools and school districts parental involvement initiatives and programs and in devising statewide parental involvement programs. The EOC would respectfully ask that the Department of Education provide to the EOC a response as to how the agency will incorporate the results of this report in its training programs pursuant to Section 59-28-140 and in staff development and technical assistance to school districts and school liaisons pursuant to Section 59-28-150.
11. Finally, to assist schools and school districts in parent involvement efforts, the EOC recommends the recent publication of *Increasing Parent Involvement in Education: A Resource Guide for South Carolina Communities* by South Carolina's Council on Competitiveness at <http://newcarolina.org/PDF/Parent-Involvement-8.pdf>.

South Carolina Parent Survey

Parents in South Carolina who have children in selected grades are being asked to complete this survey. This survey asks you how you feel about your child's school. Since this survey will be used to help make your child's school a better place, it is very important to tell us exactly what you think. Your answers will be kept private. The school will get a summary of the survey results.

MARKING INSTRUCTIONS

- Make solid marks that fill the circle completely.
- Erase cleanly any marks you wish to change.

- Make no stray marks on this form.

• Correct Mark: ● Incorrect Marks: ○ × ○ ○

Please mark how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the Learning Environment at your child's school.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
1. My child's teachers give homework that helps my child learn.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. My child's school has high expectations for student learning.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. My child's teachers encourage my child to learn.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. My child's teachers provide extra help when my child needs it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. I am satisfied with the learning environment at my child's school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please mark how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about Home and School Relations.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
1. My child's teachers contact me to say good things about my child.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. My child's teachers tell me how I can help my child learn.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. My child's teachers invite me to visit my child's classrooms during the school day.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. My child's school returns my phone calls or e-mails promptly.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. My child's school includes me in decision-making.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. My child's school gives me information about what my child should be learning in school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. My child's school considers changes based on what parents say.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. My child's school schedules activities at times that I can attend.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. My child's school treats all students fairly.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. The principal at my child's school is available and welcoming.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. I am satisfied with home and school relations at my child's school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please mark how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the Social and Physical Environment at your child's school.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
1. My child's school is kept neat and clean.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. My child feels safe at school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. My child's teachers care about my child as an individual.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Students at my child's school are well-behaved.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. I am satisfied with the social and physical environment at my child's school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please tell us if you do the following.

	I do this	I don't do this, but I would like to	I don't do this, and I don't care to	The school does not offer this activity/event
1. Attend Open Houses or parent-teacher conferences	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Attend student programs or performances	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Volunteer for the school (bake cookies, help in office, help with school fund raising, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Go on trips with my child's school (out of town band contest, field trip to the museum, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Participate in School Improvement Council meetings.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Participate in Parent-Teacher-Student Organizations (PTA, PTO, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Participate in school committees (textbook committee, spring carnival committee, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Attend parent workshops (how to help my child with school work, how to talk to my child about drugs, effective discipline, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please tell us if you do the following.

	I do this	I don't do this, but I would like to	I don't do this, and I don't care to
1. Visit my child's classrooms during the school day.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Contact my child's teachers about my child's school work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Limit the amount of time my child watches TV, plays video games, surfs the Internet, etc.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Make sure my child does his/her homework.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Help my child with homework when he/she needs it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Go on to next page.



Please mark if each of the following is TRUE or FALSE.

	TRUE	FALSE
1. Lack of transportation reduces my involvement.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Family health problems reduce my involvement.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Lack of available care for my children or other family members reduces my involvement.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. My work schedule makes it hard for me to be involved.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. The school does not encourage my involvement.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Information about how to be involved either comes too late or not at all.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. I don't feel like it is appreciated when I try to be involved.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please rate your school on...

	Very good	Good	Okay	Bad	Very bad
1. The school's overall friendliness.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. The school's interest in parents' ideas and opinions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. The school's efforts to get important information from parents.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. The school's efforts to give important information to parents.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. How the school is doing overall.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please answer the following questions about your child who attends the school identified at the bottom of this page.

- What grade is your child in? ☐ 3rd ☐ 4th ☐ 5th ☐ 6th ☐ 7th ☐ 8th ☐ 9th ☐ 10th ☐ 11th
- What is your child's gender? ☐ Male ☐ Female
- What is your child's race/ethnicity?

<input type="radio"/> African - American/Black	<input type="radio"/> Hispanic	<input type="radio"/> Asian American/Pacific Islander
<input type="radio"/> Caucasian/white	<input type="radio"/> Native American	<input type="radio"/> Other
- What grades did your child receive on his/her last report card?

<input type="radio"/> All or mostly A's and B's	<input type="radio"/> All or mostly C's and D's
<input type="radio"/> All or mostly B's and C's	<input type="radio"/> All or mostly D's and F's

Please answer the following questions about yourself. We are asking these questions because we want to be sure that schools are involving all parents. For each question, please mark only one answer. Your answers will be kept private.

- What is your gender? ☐ Male ☐ Female
- What is your race/ethnic group?

<input type="radio"/> African - American/Black	<input type="radio"/> Hispanic	<input type="radio"/> Asian American/Pacific islander
<input type="radio"/> Caucasian/white	<input type="radio"/> Native American	<input type="radio"/> Other
- What is the highest level of education you have completed?

<input type="radio"/> Attended elementary/high school	<input type="radio"/> Earned Associate Degree	<input type="radio"/> Earned college degree
<input type="radio"/> Completed high school/GED	<input type="radio"/> Attended college/training program	<input type="radio"/> Postgraduate study and/or degree
- What is your family's total yearly household income?

<input type="radio"/> Less than \$15,000	<input type="radio"/> \$25,000 - \$34,999	<input type="radio"/> \$55,000 - \$75,000
<input type="radio"/> \$15,000 - \$24,999	<input type="radio"/> \$35,000 - \$54,999	<input type="radio"/> More than \$75,000

Thank you very much for completing this survey!

DO NOT MARK IN THIS AREA



3205044

Leaphart Elementary

APPENDIX

ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2006 REPORT CARD SURVEYS



The Education Accountability Act of 1998 specifies that “school report cards should include information in such areas as...evaluations of the school by parents, teachers, and students.” To obtain these evaluations, the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) has constructed student, teacher, and parent surveys that are designed to measure perceptions of three factors: home and school relations, the school’s learning environment, and the school’s social and physical environment. The purpose of these teacher, parent, and student surveys is to obtain information related to the perceptions of these groups about your school. Results will provide valuable information to principals, teachers, parents, School Improvement Councils, and community groups in their efforts to identify areas for improvement. Results will also appear on the annual school report cards.

SCHEDULE

Teacher Surveys – on www.SCTLC.com website

February 1, 2006 – Website opens.
February 28, 2006 – Website closes.

Student & High School Student Surveys – paper forms

February 22, 2006 – Schools should receive all survey forms by this date.
March 24, 2006 – Last day for schools to ship completed survey forms to contractor.

Parent Surveys – paper forms

February 22, 2006 – Schools should receive all survey forms by this date.
March 21, 2006 – Date for parent survey forms to be returned to the school.
This is the date appearing in the letter to parents.
March 24, 2006 – Last day for schools to ship completed survey forms to contractor.

CONTACTS

If your student or parent survey forms are damaged in shipment please contact Mike Pulaski with Columbia Business Forms. His email address is mpulaski@mindspring.com.

If you have questions about administration procedures for any survey, please contact Cynthia Hearn at chearn@sde.state.sc.us or 803-734-8269.



ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2006 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

CHANGES THIS YEAR

TEACHER SURVEY – The on-line survey has been redesigned and some items have been added. Teachers are no longer required to enter a code number in order to submit the completed survey.

STUDENT & PARENT SURVEYS – Schools no longer have to maintain a copy of their shipping label. The contractor will track your shipment through the UPS system.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- ✓ Useful survey results are dependent upon candid responses. The survey administration must encourage candid responses by protecting the anonymity of the respondents and by communicating to respondents that the information is important and will be used for improvement purposes. A letter from the State Superintendent of Education enclosed with the parent survey explains the survey and its purpose.
- ✓ No names or other identifying information should appear on the survey forms. Every effort should be made to ensure that responses to the surveys remain anonymous.
- ✓ While principals and other school administrators should be aware of survey procedures and due dates, they should not be involved in handling completed survey forms. School staff are not allowed to review completed surveys.
- ✓ School principals must designate a staff person to serve as the school's survey coordinator. This person will be responsible for overseeing the distribution of surveys to students and parents and packaging completed surveys for return to contractor. The school survey coordinator also will keep teachers informed of the web-based teacher survey procedures and due dates and report any problems to the State Department of Education.
- ✓ Guidelines established by the Education Oversight Committee determine the grade level(s) to be surveyed in each school. All students in the highest grade at elementary and middle schools should complete a student survey. Their parents should receive the parent survey form. For high schools and career centers the surveys should be administered to all 11th graders and their parents. Appendix A on page 7 lists the grade level(s) to be surveyed as determined by the grade span of the school.
- ✓ Sampling is not allowed. All students in the designated grade and their parents should receive a survey. You do not need to have students complete a survey if they are absent on the day of administration or if they would have difficulty reading and responding to the items. However, these students should be given a parent survey to take home.
- ✓ Special education students are to be included and should be provided the same accommodations used for testing.
- ✓ Student and parent surveys should not be administered to children in grades two and below or their parents. For schools that contain only grades two and below, only the teacher survey will be conducted.
- ✓ These survey forms cannot be copied. The scanning equipment cannot scan photocopies.



SCHOOL SURVEY COORDINATOR INSTRUCTIONS

RECEIPT AND DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS

- Check the materials received in your shipment to ensure that you have received the following items:
 - ✓ An envelope containing;
 1. A letter to the principal from the Education Oversight Committee (EOC),
 2. Two sets of instructions for administering the surveys,
 3. A page of shipping instructions, and
 4. One pre-addressed UPS shipping label (used to return completed surveys to contractor, freight prepaid).
 - ✓ Parent survey envelopes. Each envelope contains a letter from the State Superintendent of Education and a parent survey form.
 - ✓ If applicable, Spanish parent survey envelopes. The outside of the envelope is marked with “S.”
 - ✓ Student survey forms.
- If there are not enough survey forms for your school, please refer to the master listing on the Office of Research website to check the number of survey forms ordered for your school. If you did not receive your full shipment of survey forms, contact Mike Pulaski at mpulaski@mindspring.com.
- Check a few student and parent survey forms to make sure that your school name is on the form. If you have received survey forms for another school, please contact Mike Pulaski.
- You may want to keep the box in which the survey forms were delivered to use for the return shipment.
- Give the letter from the EOC to your principal.
- Determine the number of student and parent survey forms you will need for each class at the designated grade level(s). Count the surveys into classroom stacks and distribute.

SURVEY GUIDELINES

Student & High School Student Surveys

- Student surveys should be administered in classroom settings.
- Each survey item has four response choices. Respondents must decide whether they agree, mostly agree, mostly disagree, or disagree with each statement. Students will mark their responses by darkening bubbles on the survey form. If they do not have knowledge relative to the statement, respondents should be instructed to skip the item and go on to the next one.
- Teachers should not read the survey items to the students, but they may answer student questions about the survey items. Teachers may read items to special education students with an oral administration testing accommodation. On the last page of these instructions is the script for teachers to use to explain the survey to students.
- It is important that the surveys not be folded, torn, stapled, or damaged in any way. Please have the students use pencils. A number 2 pencil is not required.



ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2006 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

Parent Survey

- Parent surveys are available in both English and Spanish. Spanish-language parent surveys are for recent immigrants or parents who do not yet possess adequate English reading skills. The Spanish version of the parent survey is enclosed in an envelope with an “S” on the outside.
- Schools will distribute envelopes containing parent surveys to students in the appropriate grade(s). Students should take the envelope home for their parents to complete the survey inside and then return the envelope to the school. Envelopes are used to maintain confidentiality.
- The parent survey should be administered to the parents of the same children participating in the student survey.
- Parents with children in the highest grade at two different schools will receive two survey forms to complete. The name of the school appears on the survey form to help avoid confusion for the parents.
- Parent surveys will not be administered to parents of children in grades two and below. For schools that contain only grades two and below, only the teacher survey will be conducted.
- The parent survey forms are identical for all grade levels. If you are surveying parents for more than one grade level, the correct number of survey forms for all grade levels will be in your shipment.
- Each survey contains fifty-four questions and should take approximately fifteen minutes to complete. The letter enclosed with the survey form tells parents that they are being asked for their opinions about their child’s school. Parents are asked to think about the entire year rather than a specific event or something that happened only once or twice. They are asked to provide honest responses that can help to improve the school.
- Parents should mark their responses by darkening bubbles on the survey. Although the scanning equipment can read pen marks, it is still a good idea to use a pencil should the parent need to change an answer. It is also important that the surveys not be folded, torn, stapled, or damaged in any way.
- No names or other identifying information should appear on the survey forms or the envelopes containing the survey form. Every effort should be made to ensure that responses to the surveys remain anonymous.

Parents have the option of mailing their completed survey form to the State Department of Education. The mailing address is provided in the letter to parents from the State Superintendent of Education.



ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2006 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

ADMINISTRATION OF SURVEYS

Student & High School Student Surveys

- Choose a day within the four-week period to administer the survey to the students. The survey should be administered to students at the same time (homeroom or advisory period for example).
- Copy the teacher instructions from the last page of these administration procedures and provide a copy of the instructions with the survey forms. Make sure the classroom teachers administering the student surveys are familiar with the administration instructions for your school.
- On the day the survey is to be administered, distribute materials to each classroom teacher within the designated grade(s).
- Make sure you are available to respond to any problems that may arise during administration of the surveys.

Parent Survey

- Distribute the parent surveys **as soon as possible** after they are received at the school. This should allow sufficient time for parents to complete and return the survey prior to the March 21 due date.
- Distribute the envelopes containing the parent survey form and letter to each classroom teacher within the designated grade(s). The envelopes containing the Spanish version of the survey and letter will be marked with an "S." Have the teachers distribute the envelopes to students. Teachers should ask students to take the envelopes home for their parents to complete the surveys. Students should be instructed not to remove the survey form or letter from the envelope. Students should bring the envelopes containing the completed surveys back to school as soon as possible.
- If your budget allows, survey forms may be mailed to students' homes.
- Make sure you are available to respond to any problems that may arise during administration of the surveys.

Teacher Survey

- The teacher survey is conducted online over the internet. The survey can be accessed from the www.sctlc.com website or the State Department of Education website at www.myschools.com.
- All instructional staff (teachers, librarians, guidance counselors, speech therapists) at the school should complete the on-line teacher survey.
- The survey may be completed using any computer with internet access. Teachers may use their home computers.
- There is no way to determine which teachers have completed the survey, but the internet site keeps track of how many survey forms have been completed for each school.
- Problems with your school's internet access should be directed to your district technology coordinator.



ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2006 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

PREPARING COMPLETED SURVEYS FOR SHIPMENT

Student & High School Student Surveys

- Place all surveys flat, face up, and turned the same way. **Return all completed survey forms, even those that may be damaged.** No changes or edits may be made to student responses. School personnel should not be allowed to review student responses.
- Carefully paper-band the completed forms with one strong paper band. Do not use rubber bands as they tear the forms. Two or three wraps with adding machine paper fastened with masking tape makes a strong band.
- Unused survey forms should be placed on top of the bound materials to be returned.

Parent Survey

- All parent surveys should be returned in their individual envelopes. Envelopes should be returned flat, face up, and all turned the same way.
- All parent surveys returned without the envelope should be placed on top of the envelopes. Place the survey forms flat, face up, and turned the same way. **Return all completed survey forms, even those that may be damaged.** No changes or edits may be made to parent responses. School personnel should not be allowed to review parent responses.
- Carefully paper-band the completed survey forms with one strong paper band. Do not use rubber bands as they tear the forms. Two or three wraps with adding machine paper fastened with masking tape makes a strong band.
- Unused survey forms should be placed on top of the bound materials to be returned.

SHIPPING THE COMPLETED SURVEYS

- Please return all of your school's completed student and parent survey forms at the same time. Package both types of surveys in the same sturdy box. Use crumpled paper, cardboard, or Styrofoam beads to fill the voids in the shipping carton to help keep surveys from being damaged due to excess movement inside the box during transit. You may want to use the box in which the survey forms were delivered for the return shipment.
- Sign and date the UPS ground bill and write on the bill the weight of your shipment. If you do not have a postal scale readily available to you, you can ask the UPS driver to weigh the package.
- Attach the pre-addressed UPS ground bill to your package. Give the package to your UPS driver the next time a delivery is made to your school. You also can drop off the package at any UPS pick-up/drop-off station. **Scheduling a special pick up from your school will cost you extra.**
- If the return UPS shipping label is missing, please contact Mike Pulaski with Columbia Business Forms. His email address is mpulaski@mindspring.com.
- All surveys must be shipped on or before **Friday, March 24, 2006**.



ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2006 REPORT CARD SURVEYS

Appendix A—Student & Parent Survey Participants

School's Grade Span	Grade Level of Students and Parents to be Surveyed		School's Grade Span	Grade Level of Students and Parents to be Surveyed
K-1, K-2, 1-2	none		4-9	5 & 9
K-3	3		5-9	9
1-3	3		6-9	9
2-3	3		7-9	9
K-4	4		8-9	9
1-4	4		K-10	5, 8, & 10
2-4	4		1-10	5, 8, & 10
3-4	4		2-10	5, 8, & 10
K-5	5		3-10	5, 8, & 10
1-5	5		4-10	5, 8, & 10
2-5	5		5-10	8 & 10
3-5	5		6-10	8 & 10
4-5	5		7-10	8 & 10
K-6	6		8-10	10
1-6	6		9-10	10
2-6	6		K-11	5, 8, & 11
3-6	6		1-11	5, 8, & 11
4-6	6		2-11	5, 8, & 11
5-6	6		3-11	5, 8, & 11
K-7	5 & 7		4-11	5, 8, & 11
1-7	5 & 7		5-11	8 & 11
2-7	5 & 7		6-11	8 & 11
3-7	5 & 7		7-11	8 & 11
4-7	5 & 7		8-11	11
5-7	7		9-11	11
6-7	7		10-11	11
K-8	5 & 8		K-12	5, 8, & 11
1-8	5 & 8		1-12	5, 8, & 11
2-8	5 & 8		2-12	5, 8, & 11
3-8	5 & 8		3-12	5, 8, & 11
4-8	5 & 8		4-12	5, 8, & 11
5-8	8		5-12	8 & 11
6-8	8		6-12	8 & 11
7-8	8		7-12	8 & 11
K-9	5 & 9		8-12	11
1-9	5 & 9		9-12	11
2-9	5 & 9		10-12	11
3-9	5 & 9		11-12	11



TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS – ALL STUDENT SURVEYS

Surveys should be administered in a classroom setting. One student should be designated in each classroom to collect the student surveys and to bring them to the school survey coordinator. To ensure confidentiality, classroom/homeroom teachers should not collect completed surveys. Classroom teachers and school administrators are not to review completed student surveys.

Pass out surveys and pencils.

The teacher should read the following script.

Today you are being asked your opinions about our school. There are no right or wrong answers. When you read each item, think about the entire year rather than a specific event or something that happened once or twice. Please provide honest and true answers so that we can change and improve our school. Do not talk to other students, but you can ask me a question if you do not understand a statement. Do NOT write your name on the survey. Do not fold or bend the sheet.

First, read the instructions at the top of the form and mark your grade. Make sure you have a pencil. Do not use a pen. You will read each statement, and mark your response on your survey sheet. Darken the ovals completely with your pencil. Erase any stray marks or changes. Remember to continue on the back of the sheet.

There are four choices for each sentence. Decide whether you agree, mostly agree, mostly disagree, or disagree with each sentence. Do your best to decide. If you do not know anything about the subject, you can skip the sentence and go on to the next one.

When you have completed the survey, check to see that you have marked only one response to each sentence and that you have marked your correct grade. Then, place your survey on your desk. (The designated student) will collect the forms.

Have the student designated to collect surveys do so. Then, have the student take the completed surveys to the school survey coordinator.

Thank You